This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

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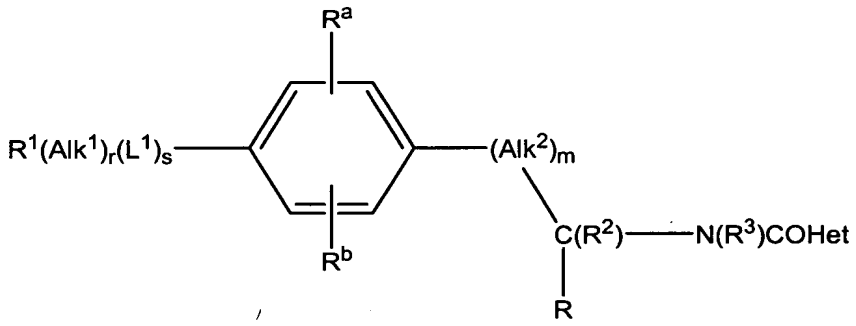
1. (currently amended) A compound of formula (1):



wherein:

R is a carboxylic acid group or ~~a~~ an ester or amide derivative thereof;

R^1 is ~~a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl, straight or branched alkoxy, or~~ optionally substituted ~~cycloaliphatic, polycycloaliphatic, heterocycloaliphatic, or polyheterocycloaliphatic,~~ C_6-C_{12} aromatic group or a C_1-C_9 heteroaromatic group containing one, two, three, or four heteroatoms selected from oxygen, sulfur, or nitrogen;

Alk^1 is an optionally substituted aliphatic or heteroaliphatic chain;

L^1 is a linker atom or group selected from the group consisting of -O-, -S-, -C(O)-, -C(O)O-, -C(S)-, -S(O)-, -$S(O)_2$-, -$N(R^4)$-, -$OC(O)N(R^4)$-, -$CSN(R^4)$-, --$C(O)N(R^4)$-, -$N(R^4)CO$-, -$N(R^4)C(O)O$-, -$N(R^4)CS$-, -$S(O)N(R^4)$-, -$S(O)_2$ $N(R^4)$-, -$N(R^4)S(O)$-, -$N(R^4)S(O)_2$-, -$N(R^4)CON(R^4)$-, -$N(R^4)CSN(R^4)$-, -$N(R^4)SON(R^4)$- and -$N(R^4)SO_2$ $N(R^4)$-;

r and s, which may be the same or different, is each zero or an integer 1 ~~provided that when r is zero, R^1 is an optionally substituted cycloaliphatic, polycycloaliphatic, heterocycloaliphatic, or polyheterocycloaliphatic, aromatic or heteroaromatic group~~;

R^a and R^b, which may be the same or different, is each an atom or group -- $L^2(CH_2)_pL^3(R^c)_q$ in which L^2 and L^3 is each a covalent bond ~~or a linker atom or group~~, p is zero or the integer 1, q is an integer 1, 2 or 3 and R^c is a hydrogen or halogen atom or a group selected from straight or branched alkyl, OR^d ~~[where R^d is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted straight or branched alkyl group]~~, $-SR^d$, $-NR^dR^e$, ~~[where R^e is just defined for R^d and may be the same or different]~~, $-NO_2$, -CN, $-CO_2R^d$, $-SO_3H$, SO_2R^d, $-OCO_2R^d$, $-CONR^dR^e$, $-OCONR^dR^e$, $-CSNR^dR^e$, $-COR^d$, $-N(R^d)COR^e$, $-N(R^d)CSR^e$, $-SO_2N(R^d)(R^e)$, $-N(R^d)SO_2R^e$, $-N(R^d)CONR^eR^f$, ~~[where R^f is a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted straight or branched alkyl group]~~, $-N(R^d)CSNR^eR^f$ or $-N(R^d)SO_2NR^eR^f$;

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R^d, R^e, and R^f are each, independently, a hydrogen atom or an optionally substituted straight or branched alkyl group;

Alk^2 is a straight or branched alkylene chain;

m is zero or an integer 1;

R^2 is a hydrogen atom or methyl group;

R^3 and R^4, which may be the same or different, are each ~~is~~ a hydrogen atom or a straight or branched alkyl group;

Het is an optionally substituted nine- to thirteen-membered fused-ring heteroaromatic group;

and the salts, solvates, hydrates, and N-oxides thereof.

2-3. (canceled)

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4. (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 wherein R is a $-CO_2H$ group.

5. (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 wherein Alk^2 is a $--CH_2$ -- chain and m is the ~~an~~ integer 1.

6. (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 wherein each of R^2 and R^3 is a hydrogen atom.

7. (canceled)

8 (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 ~~7~~ wherein R^1 is an optionally substituted phenyl, pyridyl, or pyrimidinyl group.

9. (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 wherein $-(Alk^1)_r(L^1)_s$ is a $-CH_2O-$, $-SO_2NH-$, $-C(O)O-$, or $-CON(R^4)$ group.

10. (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 9 wherein $-(Alk^1)_r(L^1)_s$ is a $-CONH$ group.

11 (currently amended) The ~~A~~ compound ~~according to~~ of Claim 1 which has the formula (1a):

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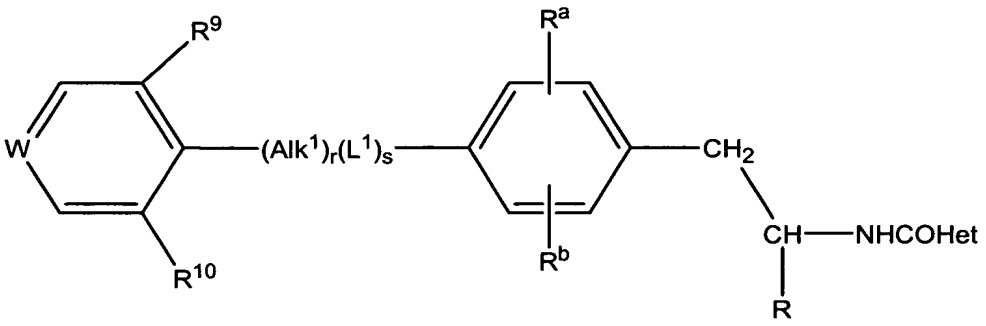

(1a)

wherein –W= is –CH= or –N=, R^9 and R^{10}, which may be the same or different is each a $-L^2(CH_2)_pL^3(R^c)_q$ atom or group ~~as generally and particularly defined above, and Alk^1, r, L^1, s, R^a, R^b, R and Het are as generally and particularly defined above~~, and the salts, solvates, hydrates and N-oxides thereof.

12-13. (canceled)

14. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of ~~according to~~ Claim 1 together with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers, excipients or diluents.